

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT DISPOSAL FACILITY



FACT: The existing on-site disposal facility is at 80% capacity. The Oak Ridge Office of Environmental Management (OREM) requires additional disposal capacity to complete its critical cleanup projects at the Y-12 National Security Complex and Oak Ridge National Laboratory.

CHALLENGE: A new disposal facility is needed in the coming years to maintain Oak Ridge's cleanup progress. Delays could impact future federal missions, decrease the availability of a skilled workforce, affect funding levels, and extend cleanup schedules.

SOLUTION: The construction of a second on-site disposal facility will allow OREM to continue cleanup efforts at the Y-12 National Security Complex and Oak Ridge National Laboratory without delay, and it will enable Department of Energy missions in national security, science, and energy.

A second onsite disposal facility will:



Remove aging excess facilities at Y-12 and Oak Ridge National Lab, making way for site modernization and future missions.



Allows OREM to direct resources toward more projects that target and address Oak Ridge's greatest remaining environmental risks.



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October 2022

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ADHERING TO STRICT WASTE ACCEPTANCE CRITERIA

The new disposal facility will only accept low-level waste—which is mainly comprised of demolition debris, equipment, and soil from cleanup. The highly contaminated waste, soil, and equipment, that accounts for approximately 90% of the contamination levels, will be shipped and disposed offsite.

BENEFITTING THE REGION

Completing cleanup activities at the Y-12 National Security Complex and Oak Ridge National Laboratory will remove environmental risks and support the missions of two of the region's largest employers. The second disposal facility will allow OREM's cleanup mission to continue without delay— keeping a highly trained and qualified workforce onsite and supporting cleanup and modernization for both sites to remain at the forefront of their respective fields.



PROVEN SAFETY RECORD

Safety is always OREM's top priority. The program has extensive experience safely constructing and operating disposal sites. Since 2002, OREM has operated the current disposal facility in Oak Ridge without impacting local residents or human health, and it has a proven track record dispositioning waste from large-scale cleanup on the Oak Ridge Reservation.



PROJECT STATUS

OREM, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) shared their Proposed Plan for project with the community in September 2018— followed by a four month public comment period. DOE offered an additional one-month public comment period in May–June 2022.

OREM submitted the final Record of Decision to EPA and TDEC in September 2022 for their concurrence and signature. That document responds to the comments OREM received during the comment periods, and it provides additional information on waste acceptance criteria, radiological discharge and ARARs than the Proposed Plan. It provides assurances for the protection of human health and the environment. Finally, it allows OREM, EPA, and TDEC to proceed to the next stage of the process and begin moving forward on a design that all parties agree will provide necessary protection. The record of Decision was approved and signed on September 30, 2022.



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